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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-04 PRS-01 INR-10

SPC-03 SS-20 NSC-10 DRC-01 RSC-01 /112 W
---------- 044606
P R 191130Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY
SECSTATE WASHDC PHIORITY 963
INFO USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT CAIRO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
DIA WASHDC

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USINFO FOR IOR/M/IPS, IBS, INE
BEIRUT FOR VOA AND RAPA
ROME FOR VOA

PARIS FOR S/S SECRETARY'S PARTY

E O 11652: N/A

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION - PRESS REVIEW DECEMBER 19

1. SYRIAN DECISION TO BOYCOTT GENEVA RECEIVES HEAVY MEDIA COVERAGE. DAVAR SAYS THIS WILL FACILITATE ISRAEL'S PARTICIPATION AT OPENING SESSION. HAARETZ EDITORIAL REMARKS
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SYRIA DOES NOT WANT INVOLVEMENT IN DIPLOMATIC PROCEDURE

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THAT WOULD LEAD TO DEFACTO RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL. ISRAELI
TV CORRESPONDENT IN GENEVA, CITING FRENCH SOURCE, REPORTED
SYRIA'S DECISION STEMS FROM FACT THAT FEW ISRAELI POWS ARE
STILL ALIVE. AFTERNOON PRESS REPORTS THAT US-USSR LETTER
INVITING UNSYG WALDHEIM TO GENEVA HAS BEEN DELIVERED
TO ISRAEL, EGYPT, JORDAN AND SYRIA. KISSINGER'S TALKS IN ISRAEL
REMAIN FRONTPAGE ITEM. HAARETZ SAY WHILE
IN ISRAEL KISSINGER OBTAINED GROMYKO'S CONSENT TO OMIT REFERENCE
TO PALESTINIANS FROM NVITATION. MAARIV
REPORTS DR. KISSINGER PROMISED MPM MEIR AND KING HUSSEIN US
SUPPORT IN PREVENTING PARTICIPATION OF INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN
DELEGATION. PRESS NOTES MRS MEIR WILL MAKE KNESSET STATEMENT
DECEMBER 20 ON POINTS OF AGREEMENT WITH US FOR ISRAEL'S ATTENDANCE AT
GENEVA. MAARIV CORRESPONDENT IN GENEVA CITES SOVIET SOURCE
AS SPECULATING THAT USSR-ISRAELI CONTACTS SHORT OF FULL DIPLOMATIC
RELATIONSHIP ARE POSSIBLE. BLOODSHED IN ROME, PRESIDENT
NIXON'S ANNOUNCEMENT DENOUNCING TERRORIST ACT AND WORLDWIDE
REACTION TO TRAGEDY FIGURE PROMINENTLY.

2. SYRIA: (A) DAVAR WRITES: "REPORT ON
SYRIAN ANNOUNCEMENT TO BOYCOTT GENEVA BROGUGHT TO GOI IN
MIDST OF CABINET SESSION. IT WAS STATED THAT THIS WILL
FACILITATE ISRAELI PARTICIPATION AT THE OPENING SESSION. ALTHOUGH
THIS DOES NOT SOLVE THE QUESTION OF ISRAELI POWS. HOWEVER, THIS
CANNT BE SEEN AS THE END OF THE CHAPTER. SINCE INTERNATIONAL
ELEMENTS WILL ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE SYRIA TO PARTICIPATE.."
(B) ISRAELI TV CORRESPONDENT (BEN-YESHAI), CITING FRENCH
SOURCE, REPORTED: ".OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF POW LIST IS
TENTAMOUNT TO A SYRIAN CONFESSION THAT IT KILLED POWS.WHILST
VISITS OF RED CROSS REPRESENTATIVES WILL REVEAL FURTHER
UNPLEASANT FACTS. THIS IS ALO THE REASON FOR SYRIA'S
ANNOUNCEMENT TO BOYCOTT GENEVA. THE POWS ARE THE ONLY
CARD WHICH THE SYRIANS HOLD FOR BARGAINING WITH ISRAEL. SYRIA
DOES NOT WANT TO BE DISGREACED BY AN ISRAELI REFUSAL TO SIT WITH IT.
(C) YEDIOT AHARONOT COMMENTS: "SYRIA'S
REFUSAL TO COME TO GENEVA. CONTAINS POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS
FOR ISRAEL. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE (A) IT WILL PREVENT A STANDSTILL
AT AN EARLY STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. SINCE IN ANY EVENT THE
CHANCES OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA ARE NEGLIGIBLE. (B)
THE ARAB UNITY AS DEMONSTRATED IN ALGIERSS. HAS BEEN GREATLY
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SHAKEN. THIS MIGHT HAVE POSITIVE IMPLICATIONS FO ISRAEL. (C) THE
EXTREMISM OF A LARGE SECTOR OF THE ARAB WORLD HAS BEEN REVEALED.
MAKING IT EASIER FOR ISRAEL TO EXPLAIN ITS CONCERN FOR SECURITY.
ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE: (A) THE CHANCES OF GETTING APOW LIST ARE NOW
SLIM. (B) SADAT MAY HAVE TO PROJECT A STIFF POSITION. IN ORDER TO
PORTECT HIMSELF AGAINST ARAB CITICISM. ALSO BECAUSE OF THE SECRET
RESOLUTION AT ALGIERS. EGYPT MIGHT, EVEN IF IT DECIDES TO COME
ALONE TO GENEVA, DECIDE THAT IT WILL NOT CONCLUDE SEPARATE AGREE-

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MENTS WITH ISRAEL. (C) THE AMERICANS MIGHT NOW REQUEST ISRAEL TO
MAKE BIGGER CONCESSIONS TO EGYPT TO COMPENSATE SADAT FOR AGREEING TO
COME TO GENEVA."

3. KISSINGER AND GENEVA: (A) MARIV COMMENTS:
"THE CONVENING OF THE CONFERENCE AT GENEVA IS IN ITSELF AN
ACHIEVEMENT
FOR DR. KISSINGER. NOT BECAUSE HE IS LOOKING FOR PUBLICITY, WHICH
HE IS NOT SHORT OF, BUT BECAUSE HE SEES THE CONFERENCE AS A GENERATOR
OF MOTION. THAT WOULD ACCELERATE PEACE NEGOTIATONS. THEREFORE
HE INVESTED ENORMOUS EFFORTS IN THE PROCEDURES LEADING TO THE
CONVENTION. WITHOUT CONCERN FOR THE SUBSTANCE AND CONTENTS.
WHENEVER HE ENCOUNTERED PROBLEMS OF SUBSTANCE. HE TRIED TO
ESCAPE THEM USING VAGUE AND AMBIGUOUS FORMULAS. THOROUGH
MAXIMUM EXPLOITATION OF EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI SENTIVITIES."
(B) HAARETZ WRITES: "WHILE IN ISRAEL.
SECRETARY KISSINGER CONTACTED GROMYKO AND OBTAINED
HIS CONSENT NOT TO MENTION THE PALESTINIANS IN THE INVITATION. IT
SEEMS THAT GROMYKO'S AGREMENT WAS GIVEN AFTER HE CONSULTED
EGYPT. DR. KISSINGER PROMISED THAT THE US WILL COOPERATE IN
PREVENTING THE INVITATION OF PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS TO WHICH ISRAEL
OBJECTS. ISRAEL, HOWEVER, DID NOT MANAGE TO INCLUDE SUCH
A PROVISION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF AN AGREEMENT. THIS IS
CAUSING WORRY IN JERUSALEM SINCE PAST EXPERIENCE HAS PROVED
THAT KISSINGER'S PROMISES ARE CHANGEABLE."

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P R 191130Z DEC 73
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TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY
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(C) IN A SEPARATE ARTICLE, MARGALIT COMMENTS: THE EARLIER US PROMISE. TO GRANT ISRAEL A VETO TO PREVENT ARAFAT'S REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA. WAS DOUBTFUL FROM THE START. SINCE IT HAS BEEN KNOWN THAT WHEN KISSINGER WAS ASKED BY SADAT FOR HIS REACTION IF ALGIERS DECIDED THAT THE TERRORISTS-- AND NOT KING HUSSEIN WERE THE RECOGNIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIANS. KISSINGER ANSWERED THAT DESPITE THE US FRIENDSHIP WIT JORDAN. THE US WILL EXAMINE EVERY NEW SITUATION THAT WILL DEVELOP IN THIS CONNECTION." NOTING THAT ISRAEL BASED ITS PAST ACTIVITIES IN THE WEST BANK ON AN ASSUMPTION THAT AN ARRANGEMENT WILL BE CONCLUDED WITH HUSSEIN'S JORDAN, MARGALIT CONCLUDES: "ISRAEL SHOULD NOT DICTATE TO THE ARABS WHO THEIR REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD BE. IT IS ENOUGH FOR ISRAEL
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TO DECLARE THAT ONLY ONE STATE SHOULD EXIST TO ITS EAST. JORDANIAN OR PALESTINIAN. ISRAEL SHOULD LET HUSSEIN AND THE TERRORISTS STRUGGLE BETWEEN THEMSELVES WITHOUT DEMONSTRATING SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION FOR EITHER."
(D) COMMENTING ON US ADMIRAL BAGELY'S PRESS INTERVIEW EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT OPEING THE SUEZ CANAL WILL CONTRIBUTE TO STRENGTHENING THE SOVIETS, HAARETZ EDITORIALLY REMARKS: "IT IS HARD TO PRESUME THAT DR. KISSINGER IS NOT AWARE OF THIS, BUT APPARENTLY HE BELIEVES THAT IF OPENING THE CANAL IS PART OF A STABLE AND DURABLE MIDDLE EAST PEACE, THE PRICE IS WORTHPAYING. ISRAEL CAN ONLY HOPE THAT CONSIDERING THE DAVANTAGES INVOLVED IN A COLOSED CNAL. WASHINGTON WILL OUTLINE TERMS FOR AN ARRANGEMENT THAT WOULD ENSURE A STABLE PEACE."
(E) COMMENTING ON KISSINGER'S TALKS IN ISRAEL AND THE SUSPICION WHICH PROCEDED HIS VISIT, DAVAR COMMENTS: "IN THE SAME MANNER THAT THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THAT FAR-REACHING SUSPICION WHICH LED TO GLOOMY PESSIMISM. THERE IS NO ROOM (NOW) FOR EXTRA HAPPINESS. DESPITE THE FACT THAT KISSINGER AND HIS AIDES EXPRESSED SURPRISE OVER THE EXTENT OF ISRAELI OPPOSITION (TO UN AUSPICES AND PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION). KISSINGER IMMEDIATELY REALIZED THAT. THIS CONCEALS REAL ISRAELI WORRY WHICH ACCUMULATED FROM BITTER EXPERIENCE OF

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PAST WARS AND CONTACTS WITH ARABS. THEN BOTH (ISRAELI AND US) STARTED TO DISMANTLE THE OBSTACLES. THE ISRAELIS SAID MANY THINGS WHICH NEUTRALIZED THE UNSC RESOLUTION. HOWEVER THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM REMAINS HANGING. THE WAY OUT OF THE IMPASSE WAS ACHIEVED ON THE SUBJECT OF SEPARATION OF FORCES. WHICH IS WEIGHING HEAVILY ON EGYPT. IT SEEMS THAT EGYPT IS INTERESTED INA ARRANGEMENT AND ISRAEL IS READY TO RESPOND."

4. USSR-ISRAELI CONTACTS: MARIV WRITES:
"CONTACTS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE USSR ARE EXPECTED IN GENEVA IN ANTICIPATION OF THE CONFERENCE. THIS WAS HINTED BY A SOVIET SOURCE YESTERDAY, BEFORE THE SYRIAN ANNOUNCEMENT TO BOYCOTT THE CONFERENCE WAS MADE PUBLIC. WHIN I ASKED HIM WHETHER THIS MEANT THE CONCLUSION OF A DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIP, HE REPLIED NO, SAYING THAT HE EXPECTS AN ARRANGEMENT WHICH WILL INCLUDE AN EXCHANGE OF COMMERICAL MISSIONS, MUTUAL OPENING OF AIRLINE OFFICES
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OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT."
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